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Opening Convocation begins new year with a bang

by Cara Lynn Croom

Opening Convocation 1988 literally encompassed topics as diverse as day and night. Mathematics, media services, home economics, music and the performing arts were highlighted in the multi-media production hosted by President John Weems. All of these elements were drawn together by the use of computer technology and possibilities for the future.

The program began with slides showing the faces of Johnson Hall as the sun rose and set, as shadows stretched and withdrew. Then the audience's attention was focused upon a bunch of daisies in a field which were increasingly buffeted by wind. Soon the audience realized that the wind was created by the blades of a helicopter. The helicop-

ter lifted to give a bird's-eye-view of Meredith involving some impressive screen graphics.

Dr. Weems created a "homey" atmosphere when he talked about the nature of "balcony-people" as he began the program from a microphone in the balcony. Dr. Weems stressed the fact that faculty and students were seated together and that the future is a joint effort. He also stated that the faculty and staff are the keys to Meredith's future but that it must be a cooperative effort.

Jo Guglielmi and Kathleen O'Brien introduced the audience to fractals, mathematical processes in which a small part is an exact replica of the larger whole.

Head librarian, Janet Freeman, introduced the CD ROM program which stores an infinitely greater amount of material than the old

floppy disk program. Kim Barker showed how the program may be used to research a journal article on fractals and nature.

Ellen Goode of the Home Economics department showed how the computer can be used to develop architectural plans and design house interiors. Dr. Goode did state that the mouse had not replaced the pencil when students are learning basic skills but rather speeds up the process for students who understand the fundamentals.

Dawn Batts and Tony Vaglio were recognized for the many hours they spent together composing the original score for the convocation. Batts then showed the audience how the computer and the synthesizer are used to write and record original music.

John Creagh continued the program by speaking about the use of technology to enhance theatrical performances. Then Alyson Colwell, with two students performed modern dance with computerized lighting, music, and graphics. Backlighting and audience lighting created an unusual atmosphere and the audience seemed to enjoy the visual and audio display.

The program was completed with a slide, screen, and musical presentation illustrating facets of Meredith. The finale included a simulated fireworks show with lights and sounds.

This convocation broke the mold of traditional speeches for the opening convocation, creating an excitement about Meredith and future opportunities. Congratulations to John Kincheloe and his staff along with the aforementioned persons for an exhilarating beginning to the 1988-89 year.



Somewhere over the Rainbow. Following in Meredith tradition, the balloon rainbow greets new freshmen as they arrive.